

## How is WASHCAP different from regular food assistance?

Federal regulations set the rules for the food assistance programs. See the table below for some of the differences between WASHCAP and food assistance:

WASHCAP	Regular Food Assistance
The WASHCAP food assistance application is one page long. The interview for SSI is also the interview for WASHCAP.	The application for food assistance is longer, and clients must complete an additional interview.
A client must get SSI to be eligible for WASHCAP.	A client does not have to get SSI to be eligible for food assistance.
<p>A client is eligible for WASHCAP if they get SSI benefits and SSA determines that the client:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meets the definition of "Living arrangement A" (living alone);</li> <li>▪ Purchases and prepares food separately; and</li> <li>▪ Has no earned income.</li> </ul>	We decide if an assistance unit is eligible for food assistance based on the client's living arrangements, who they purchase and prepare food with, and other eligibility factors under WAC 388-400-0040 and 388-400-0045.
<p>A client must complete an application for benefits every 24 months unless SSA has recertified their SSI benefits.</p> <p>When SSA has recertified a client's SSI benefits, their WASHCAP benefits are automatically extended for 24 months from the date SSA recertified the client's SSI.</p>	Depending on the client's age and other circumstances, a client may have to complete an application and have an interview for benefits every 3 to 24 months.
A client does not have to give us proof of their circumstances. SSA gives us this information.	A client must give us proof of their income, rent or mortgage, utilities, medical expenses, living, and eating arrangements.
<p>A client must tell SSA about changes within ten calendar days after the month the change happened.</p> <p>The client does not report this change to DSHS.</p>	<p>A client must report changes to the local office within ten days of when they knew about the change. The client may have to provide proof of the changes.</p> <p>If the client gets SSI, they must also tell SSA about the change within ten calendar days after the month the change happened.</p>
A client's WASHCAP benefits start the first of the month after the month SSA starts their ongoing SSI benefits. We do not prorate WASHCAP benefits.	A client's food assistance benefits usually start from the date the client applied for food assistance benefits. We determine the exact date the client's benefits are effective under WAC 388-406-0055. We prorate the first month's benefits based on this date.
We do not offer expedited service for WASHCAP benefits.	A client that qualifies for expedited service can get food assistance within five days of the date the client applied for benefits.